

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-14 PA-02 H-02 ISO-00
SSM-05 SIG-03 SSO-00 PM-05 INR-10 INRE-00 SS-15
NSAE-00 ACDA-12 ARA-14 /116 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:WBHARRIS:RGH
APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN
PA/PRS - MR. CARTER
H - MR. FLATEN
SSM - MR. MC ANDREW
NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH
NEA/EGY - MR. MARTENSEN
NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER
NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM

-----108601 160118Z /62

O 152333Z MAY 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
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USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
JCS WASHDC 0000

CIA WASHDC 0000
NSC WASHDC 0000
USCINCEUR
DOD
USICA

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD, TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - MAY 15

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR MAY 15. FYI ONLY,
SPOKESMAN TODAY WAS HODDING CARTER III.

Q. WE KNOW THAT THE SAUDIS WERE NOT INVOLVED IN ANY WAR
AGAINST ISRAEL. DID THE UNITED STATES THEN STIPULATE TO
ISRAEL NOT TO USE THE PLANES AGAINST SAUDI ARABIA?
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A. THE STIPULATIONS THAT ARE OFFERED ON ALL OUR ARMS
TRANSFERS, AS YOU KNOW, AND I THINK THIS WAS POSTED TODAY,
INVOLVE A NUMBER OF CONDITIONS SINCE THE ARMS CONTROL ACT
OF 1975 -- AMONG THEM, THAT THE WEAPONS SHALL BE USED FOR
SELF-DEFENSE OR IN FULFILLMENT OF OBLIGATIONS ARISING
FROM CERTAIN UN-MANDATED OPERATIONS; THAT THEY WILL NOT
BE TRANSFERRED TO OTHER PARTIES WITHOUT THE EXPRESS CONSENT
OF THIS GOVERNMENT, AND OTHER THINGS.

OBSOLETELY, THERE WERE WEAPONS TRANSFERS THAT TOOK PLACE
BEFORE SOME OF THESE STIPULATIONS, BUT I'M SIMPLY SAYING
THAT IS POLICY NOW.

Q. IN A WEEKEND SPEECH IN WHICH THEY THREATENED TO INVADE

SOMALIA, COLONEL MENGISTU SAID THAT THERE ARE AMERICAN
ADVISERS AND THOUSANDS OF ARAB AND PAKISTANI TROOPS IN
SOMALIA. COULD YOU COMMENT ON THAT?

A. WE DO NOT HAVE ANY AMERICAN ADVISERS ASSISTING SOMAL-
IAN FORCES. I AM NOT ABLE TO COMMENT ON ANY OTHER PART OF
THAT, BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW.

Q. I WAS WONDERING HOW THE STATE DEPARTMENT FELT ABOUT
EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR GHORBAL PROPOSING A PEACE FUND FOR A
PALESTINIAN STATE. HAVE WE HAD ANY INFORMATION FROM
EGYPT ABOUT THIS? WHERE DO WE STAND ON THIS WHOLE SUBJECT,

INCLUDING A PALESTINIAN STATE?

A. OUR POSITION ON A PALESTINIAN STATE REMAINS THE SAME. I HAVE SEEN THAT REPORT. I DONT HAVE ANYTHING BEYOND THAT.

Q. WE HAVEN'T HAD ANYTHING FROM THE EGYPTIANS ON IT BESIDES THE SPEECH ITSELF?
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A. I DO NOT BELIEVE WE HAVE ANYTHING WHICH IS A SUGGESTION FROM THEM OF SUCH A FORMAL THING.

Q. IN A MORE GENERAL SENSE, HAS THE UNITED STATES BEEN PRESSING ANY PARTICULAR PEACE INITIATIVE IN THE LAST TWO OR THREE WEEKS?

A. I THINK THAT THE WAY THE SECRETARY OUTLINED WHAT WE HAVE BEEN DOING, AND TRYING TO DO, IN AN ADDRESS HE GAVE LAST FRIDAY, I BELIEVE, TO AN AUDIENCE HERE PRETTY WELL EXPRESSES IT. I THINK IT PRETTY WELL HAS BEEN REFLECTED IN WHAT I HAVE SAID BEFORE, THAT WE ARE BOTH INTERESTED IN SEEING IF WE CAN GET MOVEMENT ON CONCRETE MATTERS, AND AT THE SAME TIME PURSUING ON A PARALLEL TRACK THE EFFORT TO GET THE GENERAL STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES, WHICH HAS BEEN ONE OF OUR CENTRAL THRUSTS FOR SOME TIME.

BUT, THE REAL QUESTION, I SUPPOSE, IS, DO WE HAVE SOME NEW INITIATIVE IN HAND AT THIS TIME?

NO. WE ARE APPROXIMATELY WHERE WE WERE WHEN MR. DAYAN AND MR. BEGIN LEFT HERE.

Q. HAS THE CONTROVERSY OVER THE ARMS SALE AFFECTED THE ADMINISTRATION'S CAPACITY TO DEVOTE ITSELF TO THE PROBLEM OF PEACE-SEEKING?

A. I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT WE HAVE BEEN DETERRED FROM THE EFFORT. INDEED, WE FEEL, AS WE HAVE SAID MANY TIMES, THAT CENTRAL TO OUR ABILITY TO PROCEED IN THE PEACE EFFORT IS OUR ABILITY TO HAVE THE ARMS SALES GO THROUGH. AND THAT, WE BELIEVE, IS PART AND PARCEL OF THE PEACE
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EFFORT.

Q. THE SECRETARY SAID ON FRIDAY THAT THE DEPARTMENT WAS WORKING INTENSELY ON NEW INITIATIVES ON THE MIDDLE EAST, AND THAT THE TIME WAS SOON COMING WHEN THEY WOULD BE NECESSARY LEST THE PROCESS RETROGRESS.

DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA OF WHEN AND IN WHAT FORM THOSE NEW INITIATIVES MIGHT BE FORTHCOMING?

A. NO. WHAT HE SAID WAS A LITTLE MORE CONDITIONAL THAN THAT, I.E. PART OF WHAT WILL SHAPE OUR NEXT STEPS STILL REMAINS SOMETHING THAT HAS BEEN HANGING FOR SOME TIME, WHICH IS A SET OF CONCRETE RESPONSES TO SOME QUESTIONS WHICH WE HAVE ALREADY RAISED.

Q. THERE IS A REPORT OUT OF BEIRUT TO THE EFFECT THAT THE PLO IS INTERESTED IN HAVING CUBAN TROOPS MOVE INTO SOUTHERN LEBANON. THE STORY IS SOMEWHAT FUZZY, TO BE SURE, BUT THERE IS SOME KIND OF AN IMPLICATION THAT THE PLO IS PREPARED TO ASK SUPPORT FROM CUBA.

RELATED TO THAT, THERE IS ANOTHER REPORT THAT THE MORALE OF THE UN FORCE IN SOUTHERN LEBANON IS SAGGING. THE PLO UNITS ARE INFILTRATING SOUTHERN LEBANON, AND IT IS GIVING RISE, I SUPPOSE, TO SOME SPECULATION THAT THERE MAY BE A GREAT PROBLEM WITH THE UN FORCE.

Q. ON THE FIRST QUESTION, WE ARE NOT AWARE OF ANY CUBAN TROOPS -- TO REPEAT MYSELF FROM A QUESTION THAT WAS ASKED BEFORE -- OR EVEN PERSONNEL BEING INJECTED INTO LEBANON.

SECONDLY, WE WOULD STRONGLY OPPOSE SUCH INTERVENTION IN LEBANON. WE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO EXTEND ITS AUTHORITY OVER THE COUNTRY. IN ITS UNCLASSIFIED

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SOVEREIGN CAPACITY, ONLY THE GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON HAS THE AUTHORITY TO AUTHORIZE ANY FOREIGN ACTIVITY WITHIN LEBANON'S BORDERS, AND THEY CLEARLY DO NOT WISH TO HAVE CUBAN TROOPS THERE.

Q. LET ME ASK YOU, THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT HAS ACTUALLY TOLD US THAT LEBANON IS OPPOSED TO ANY CUBAN TROOPS

ENTERING LEBANON?

A. IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT THEY ARE NOT WILLING TO SEE THE CONFLICT ALONG THE LINES THAT WERE SUGGESTED IN THAT INTERVIEW EXTENDED IN ANY WAY, AND THAT WOULD INCLUDE THE INTRODUCTION OF CUBAN TROOPS.

IN ANY CASE, DESPITE SPORADIC REPORTS OF, WE ARE WILLING TO CALL UPON, OR THE CUBANS WOULD BE WILLING TO DO THIS, WE SEE NO SIGNS WHATSOEVER OF SUCH INVOLVEMENT.

ON THE SECOND QUESTION YOU RAISED, THE UN, WE BELIEVE, IS

GOING AN OUTSTANDING JOB IN LEBANON. UN TROOPS HAVE SHOWN THAT THEY HAVE THE COURAGE AND DETERMINATION TO CARRY OUT THE DIFFICULT TASKS THAT ARE ASSIGNED TO THEM. THERE IS EVERY REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THEY WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO.

WHEN THAT FORCE WAS ESTABLISHED, NO ONE HAD ANY ILLUSIONS ABOUT IT BEING AN EASY TASK. THE PURPOSES UNDER WHICH UNIFIL WERE ESTABLISHED REMAIN -- TO GAIN WITHDRAWAL OF ISRAELI FORCES FROM LEBANON, TO ESTABLISH A PEACEKEEPING FORCE TO MAINTAIN SECURITY IN SOUTHERN LEBANON, AND TO RE-ESTABLISH LEBANESE GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY IN SOUTHERN LEBANON.

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PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE ON ALL THREE FRONTS, BUT THERE ARE STILL REAL PROBLEMS FACING UNIFIL, PROBLEMS WHICH, IN OUR VIEW, CAN BE OVERCOME.

I WOULD JUST NOTE THAT UNIFIL'S CAPACITY TO MEET ITS RESPONSIBILITIES RELIES IN GREAT PART ON COOPERATION FROM ALL THE PARTIES, AND IT IS THAT KIND OF COOPERATION WHICH WE CONTINUE TO URGE.

Q. ON A RELATED QUESTION, THE PRESIDENT, OVER THE WEEKEND, ACTUALLY LAST FRIDAY, IN A VERY CAREFULLY WORDED STATEMENT TALKED ABOUT CUBANS MOVING LATELY INTO THE MIDDLE EAST, AND HE ONLY SINGLED OUT SOUTH YEMEN, WHERE THEY HAVE BEEN FOR ABOUT EIGHT YEARS.

CAN YOU GIVE OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST WHERE THERE ARE CUBANS, AND THEY HAVE MOVED IN THERE LATELY?

A. AS WE HAVE POINTED OUT IN SOMETHING THAT WAS POSTED OR WAS OFFERED OVER THE WEEKEND, THAT WHILE THEY HAVE BEEN THERE FOR SOME TIME, THAT DURING THE GREAT BUILDUP IN ETHIOPIA, THE FORCE'S PRESENCE WAS AUGMENTED.

OTHER THAN THAT, AND OTHER THAN THE ETHIOPIAN FACTS WHICH ARE FAIRLY WELL DOCUMENTED, I DON'T HAVE CUBAN FORCES TO OFFER YOU.

I THINK THE PRESIDENT WAS SPEAKING OF THE GENERAL INTRUSION OF CUBAN FORCES IN THAT AREA.

Q. OVER THE WEEKEND THERE SEEMED TO BE SOME CONFLICT BETWEEN THE SAUDI FOREIGN MINISTER'S VIEW OF THE AIRCRAFT THAT IS IN THE SENATE NOW AND THE STATEMENTS BY SECRETARY BROWN. JUST WHERE DO WE STAND? HAS THE SAUDI GOVERNMENT SAID THEY WILL DO THIS, THAT OR THE NEXT
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THING IN WRITING, OR HAVE THEY COMMUNICATED TO US? WOULD YOU SUMMARIZE IT FOR US?

A. THE SAUDIS HAVE INFORMED US THAT THE ASSURANCES CONTAINED IN SECRETARY BROWN'S LETTER ARE ASSURANCES BEHIND WHICH THEY STAND, AND THAT IS, WE BELIEVE, A SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION OF THE QUESTION YOU RAISE.

Q. HOW DO THEY GIVE US THESE ASSURANCES? WAS IT IN A LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT, OR TO WHOM? HOW DID WE GET THIS?

A. THESE ASSURANCES WHICH WE HAVE MADE PUBLIC WERE OFFERED TO US ON THE BASIS OF COMMUNICATION WITH THEM AT SEVERAL LEVELS. THEY HAVE BEEN PUBLICLY AFFIRMED BY THE SAUDIS AFTER THEIR PUBLICATION, AND I THINK THAT THAT ASSURANCE IN AND OF ITSELF IN PUBLIC AFFIRMATION IS AS GOOD A ONE AS I COULD OFFER YOU.

Q. THESE ARE ORAL ASSURANCES?

A. I DON'T KNOW THAT I HAVE A PIECE OF PAPER TO THAT EFFECT. THEY ARE, OF COURSE, SAYING THAT THEY AGREE TO SOMETHING WHICH HAS BEEN PUT ON PAPER AND OFFERED TO THE CONGRESS.

Q. YOU MAY HAVE POSTED THIS ANSWER FRIDAY WHETHER YOU HAD IN RECENT DAYS RECEIVED ANY INFORMATION FROM, OR STATEMENT FROM THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT CLARIFYING THEIR POSITION ON THESE PLANE SALES, WHICH CONTINUES AMBIGUOUS. HAVE THEY WITHDRAWN THEIR REQUEST FOR PLANES?

A. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE UNCLASSIFIED

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CABINET YESTERDAY IS ONE WHICH I HAVE TO TAKE AS BEING THEIR POSITION ON THE PLANES. I DON'T WANT TO TRY AND INTERPRET THAT STATEMENT FOR YOU, BUT I BELIEVE THAT THEY

WANT THE PLANES, AND THEY CONTINUE TO FEEL THAT THE OTHER PARTS OF THE ARMS PROPOSALS ARE NOT IN THEIR INTEREST.

Q. BY THE WAY, DO YOU HAVE ANY REACTION TO THE CABINET'S JUDGMENT ON THE CHIEF OF STAFF'S REMARKS?

A. NO. NO REACTION TO THAT.

Q. DID YOU GET ANY PROTESTS OR NOTES FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF EGYPT ON THE OIL OPERATIONS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORY?

A. THAT ISSUE HAS BEEN RAISED REPEATEDLY. I DONT KNOW
THE LAST TIME THAT IT WAS. I WILL SEE IF I HAVE SOMETHING
WHICH IS TIMELY ENOUGH TO FALL INSIDE, I EXPECT, THAT
QUESTION'S PARAMETERS. VANCE

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 26 sep 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS CONFERENCES, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE123836
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: NEA/P:WBHARRIS:RGH
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Expiration:
Film Number: D780205-1175
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197805112/baaaeyqs.tel
Line Count: 332
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 68793895-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 7
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2540035
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - MAY 15
TAGS: SOPN, PEPR, MASS, XF, US
To: AMMAN BEIRUT MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/68793895-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014